report by PAC to the Parliament, Action Taken Note will be finalized by Ministry of Railways as per recommendations of the Committee.

Route network of Railways in Andhra Pradesh

85. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the route network of railways in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) the present position thereof;

(c) what steps Government have taken to lay new route networks especially in Andhra Pradesh during the last three years; and

(d) what are the new additional routes to come during the current year in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The rail route kilometres in Andhra Pradesh as on 31.03.2006 (latest available) is 5185 kilometres consisting of 4856 Broad Gauge and 329 Metre Gauge route.

(c) and (d) During last 3 years, Manoharabad-Kotipalli (148.9 Kilometres), Jaggayapet—Mallacheruvu (19.1 Kilometres), Vishnupuram—Janapahar (11 Kilometres) and Obulavaripalle—Krishnapatnam (113 Kilometres) new line projects, falling fully/partly in the State of Andhra Pradesh, have been taken up and rayadurg-Tumkur (213 Kilometres) new line project has been included in the Budget 2007-08. Rs. 200 crore was allocated for ongoing new line projects in Andhra Pradesh during last 3 years.

During last 3 years, Kakinada-Kotipalli (44 Kilometres) and Karimnagar-Jagtiyal (48 Kilometres) new lines have been completed and Nandyal-S. Uppalapadu (42 Kilometres) segment of Nandyal—Yerraguntla (126 Kilometres) is targeted for completion during the current year.

Increasing steel prices

86. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the steel prices are rising and are not reachable to the common man;

(b) if so, the prices of steel during the last 3 years, year-wise;

(c) the reasons for such increase;

(d) whether it is also a fact that the producers pass the increase in prices to consumers saying that they have no control over the rise in input prices; and

(e) if so, the steps being taken to rectify the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) Yes, Sir. Steel prices in the retail market have moved up by 2.6 to 12.4% during the three-year period from October 2004 to October 2007. However, to address the need of common man, Ministry of Steel has taken conscious effort in improving the distribution system of steel items of common use, by expanding the dealer network of the Public sector Steel Companies. As on date, Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL) has 1287 dealers covering 602 districts in the country while Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL) has appointed 131 district level dealers to cater to the requirements of small consumers.

(b) Month-wise retail price data for Mumbai retail market during the last three years, on selected steel items is given in the enclosed Statement *(See* below*)*.

(c) The rise in steel prices over the past three years can be attributed to a rise in input costs, strong growth in domestic demand particularly from the manufacturing and construction sectors and also due to rise in steel price in the international market.

(d) The percentage increase in some input costs, based on the printed annual accounts of Steel Authority of India Ltd. given in the table below suggests that the steel producers have not passed on the entire burden of the rise in input cost on to the consumers but neutralized it to a great extent by increasing efficiency levels.

Input Material Percentage change between 2004 *and* 2007

Iron Ore	138.2
Coal —Total	183.4
Coke	121.6
Limestone	130.5
Dolomite	175.1
Ferro Manganese	145.6
Ferro Silicon	121.1
Zinc	292.0

(e) In a liberalized scenario the steel prices are decided by the inter play of market forces. However, Government has taken various steps to maintain a stable price line and also to improve the availability of steel in the country. Some of these are the reduction in import duty on steel to 5%, constitution of a Steel Price Monitoring Committee, which provides an interface between the producers and consumers of steel under the aegis of Ministry of Steel, appointment of dealers in every district in the country by the steel public sector units and also arrangements made by them to transport the materials to the dealers' premises at their own costs.

Statement

Price Movement of various categories of steel at Mumbai retail market during the month of October in last 3 *years*

(Rs./Tonne)

Products	October 2005	October 2006	October 2007
HR Coil (2.5 mm)	27000	32250 (25.00%)	33750 (4.65%)
CR Coil (0.63 mm)	33000	34000 (11.36%)	36750 (5.00%)
GP Sheets (0.63 mm)	37000	41000 (5.41%)	39000 (-4.88%)
TOR/TOT (10 mm)	27000	28250 (12.04%)	30250 (7.08%)
Wire Rods (8 mm)	24000	26625 (26.46%)	30350 (13.99%)
Rounds (16 mm)	26750	26250 (9.35%)	29250 (11.43%)
Plates (12 mm)	27750	32000 (21.62%)	33750 (5.47%)

(Figure in parenthesis indicate the % variation over the previous year)